

UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Voluntary National Review 2018

ROMANIA

Main Messages of the Review

“Transformation towards a sustainable and resilient Romania” Romania’s Voluntary National Report, July 2018

Romania developed the current Voluntary National Review with the occasion of celebrating 100 years from the Great Union, providing information about the implementation process of Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (emphasizing the goals under review this year). The Review presents the progress accomplished so far and the aims for 2030, resulted from the analysis of SDGs indicators from multiple sectors and from here on will represent a reference line for further development of Romania, in the spirit of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The current Programme of Government stated from its vision the principle “Leave no one behind”, addressing all policies and priority actions in an integrated approach. The first National Sustainable Development Strategy of Romania (NSDS) was elaborated in 1999, reviewed in 2008 (one year after the EU accession) and now we are in the process of reviewing the Strategy in order to localize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs. The process of localizing the SDGs started in 2016, feeding both - VNR and the reviewing of the NSDS.

The institutional architecture for sustainable development in Romania comprises the Inter-ministerial Committee with responsibilities of coordinating the sustainable development policy lead by the Viceprime-Minister, Minister of Environment (with members who are vice-ministers from all Governmental institutions), the Sub-Committee for Sustainable Development of the Parliament of Romania and the Department for Sustainable Development under the Prime-Minister Office.

Romania’s biodiversity can be described as unique and generous, going through all the levels of the ecological systems, and thus, being the main reason why we should have a regional partnership to stop in tracks the biodiversity decline, tackling species extinction and ecosystems degradation due to anthropic impact. The Programme on Environmental Protection through Biodiversity Conservation (part of the Programme of Government 2018-2020) addresses the fundamental role of habitat played in biodiversity conservation, with the main habitat targeted being represented by forest ecosystems.

Romania's low dependency on imported energy resources, combined with structural changes in the economy, leads to the downsizing and relative decline of energy-intensive industries, helping the country to avoid major disruptions during Europe's recurring energy crisis. Romania has a geographical location which favors wind, solar and water energy, as well as mineral resources with a significant untapped potential caused by savings of applied sustainable development and circular economy. The energy sector has an essential contribution to Romania's development with strong influence on economic growth, wellbeing and the environment. To meet consumer expectations in the long run, the Romanian energy sector must become cleaner, more economically robust and technologically advanced.

We acknowledge the potential of a leap in an adequate ecological-economical interface with our natural capital represented by energy consumption. Once this potential is going to be used, it is going to drive an unforeseen economical increase and environmental anthropic impact reduction, unleashing a sustainable technology and economy growth that would enable us to export energy and good practice for a regional green partnership. One such example of lowering our energy consumption for sustainable purposes is represented by the Green House Programme that aims to minimizing the use of energy necessary for household heating, by the means of thermal insulation and solar panels. In the past 15 years we managed to achieve a 24% (and slightly above) renewable energy share in energy production, target that has been settled for the year 2020, mainly with the help of solar panels and wind power, auxiliary with usage of cogeneration.

Romania has a long tradition as a sustainable and resilient society, being one of the oldest sustainable rural civilizations in Europe, rich in natural resources and human knowledge on how to live in harmony with nature. The revolutionary work "The Entropy Law and the Economic Process" published in 1971 by Nicolae Georgescu-Roegen represents a milestone on developing the sustainable development concept. For Romania, as well as for all countries, sustainable development is not one of several possible options, but the only rational prospect for advancement as a nation.